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Chairman: Mr. HADID (Algeria)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 123: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995 (continued) (A/48/6, A/48/7, A/48/16 (Parts I and II) and A/48/32/Rev.1/Add.1; A/C.5/48/9 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/C.5/48/26 and A/C.5/48/51)

General debate (continued)

1. Mr. NAGY (Hungary) said that the Hungarian delegation continued to support the Secretary-General's reforms, for no effort should be spared to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations. However, the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 (A/48/6) showed how good intentions could produce mixed results. Hungary concurred with the general observations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) but had difficulty with specific ACABQ recommendations and proposals of the Secretary-General.

2. In section 9 (Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis) the Hungarian delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's proposals on micro-economic activities, which should help the countries in transition in Eastern Europe. Unlike the Advisory Committee, therefore, it supported the provision of the necessary human resources.

3. Under section 21 on human rights, measures commensurate with the increasing workload of the Centre for Human Rights must be taken. The proposed increase in resources was a recognition of the high priority of the Centre's activities. No reduction would be acceptable to the Hungarian delegation.

4. Hungary had agreed reluctantly to the relocation of substantive units, on the understanding that all United Nations centres would receive equal treatment. However, the budget proposals contained nothing to compensate for the shift of activities from the United Nations Office at Vienna (UNOV) despite the request made in resolution 47/212 B. The Advisory Committee was right that upward reclassification of posts should not be used to promote staff, but that did not mean that all reclassification should be blocked; where the duties of a post had increased, it should be upgraded.

5. Mr. DIMOV (Bulgaria) said that his delegation commended the efforts of the Secretary-General to adapt the organizational structure to the challenges of the new world environment and the attention given to the priority areas of peace-keeping, humanitarian assistance and social and economic development. It shared the serious concerns which others had expressed about the programme budget planning procedure. The involvement of every Member State in the planning of the programme budget would increase their sense of responsibility for meeting their financial obligations.

6. His delegation welcomed the simplification of the budget format, and shared the opinion of ACABQ that programmes, subprogrammes and functions of many departments and units, especially those established under the restructuring, could be greatly streamlined in order to eliminate duplication. The methodology used in the preparation of budget estimates should ensure efficiency,

(Mr. Dimov, Bulgaria)

transparency and effective utilization of resources, in the absence of additional financing for new activities. It agreed that some reductions in the programme budget could be introduced. With regard to requested increases in the number of high-level posts, his delegation believed that the organizational structure should not become top-heavy. It agreed with the views expressed on the recruitment freeze and the need to observe the principle of equitable geographical distribution, particularly with regard to high-level posts.

7. His delegation attached special importance to the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 724 (1991) concerning Yugoslavia. The Secretariat unit servicing that Committee should be reinforced in order to accelerate the processing of applications, in line with the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) for increases in staff and resources allocated to the servicing of the subsidiary bodies of the Security Council. His delegation also supported efforts to secure new resources for training.

First reading (continued)

Part VI. Human rights and humanitarian affairs (continued)

8. Mr. MADDENS (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the great importance of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs should be reflected in the financial and human resources allocated to it. The European Union therefore welcomed the Secretary-General's proposals, which struck a balance between the coordination of humanitarian assistance and direct intervention as a means of providing it. It was also logical for the Secretary-General to continue to consider funding a larger part of the Department's work from the regular budget. While the overall efficiency of the Department should be improved, priority must be given to operational functions. The Department's importance had been underestimated, and the Secretary-General should submit new budgetary proposals for section 23 together with his proposals for redeployment.

9. Mr. WOLFFHECHEL (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries on section 23, said that they attached great importance to the Department's coordination of the humanitarian emergency assistance provided by the international community. In view of the increase in its work, the funds and staff allocated to the Department should be substantially augmented, and the budgetary increase proposed by the Secretary-General represented a minimum. The Nordic countries welcomed the support of CPC for the strengthening of the Department; although they shared the concern of ACABQ that the allocated resources should be used efficiently, they could not subscribe to any cuts in the proposed budget.

10. As the Advisory Committee had pointed out, the Secretary-General's proposal that a larger part of the Department's core functions should be financed from the regular budget was a policy question for the General Assembly to decide. The Nordic countries supported the Secretary-General's position and were glad that the principle had been reflected to some extent in the budget proposals.

(Mr. Wolffhechel, Denmark)

They also supported his view that the United Nations must have the means to translate humanitarian ideals into tangible assistance and were willing to pay their share of the costs.

11. Ms. SAEKI (Japan) said that the Japanese delegation supported the strengthening of the Centre for Human Rights and requested the Secretariat to provide more background information about the proposals.

12. With regard to section 22A (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)) Japan supported the proposal that the posts of chiefs of mission in the least developed countries should be recognized as a proper charge to the regular budget. It supported the strengthening of the coordinating function of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs described in section 23 and agreed that the Secretary-General should keep under review the possibility of funding more core functions from the regular budget. That did not affect Japan's position that humanitarian field operations should be implemented by the relevant organizations. The administrative costs of the secretariat of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction and the secretariat costs of preparing for the World Conference should be funded from the regular budget, but Decade-related projects continue to be financed by voluntary contributions.

13. Mr. MERIFIELD (Canada), speaking also on behalf of Australia and New Zealand, said that the ACABQ recommendations on part VI were seriously wrong. There was no technical ground for the post cuts proposed in sections 21, 22A and 23. The Advisory Committee must examine part VI solely on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General and the recommendations of CPC.

14. It had made no recommendation under section 21 for the Centre for Human Rights; the Centre was underfunded, and the General Assembly must at least endorse the Secretary-General's proposals. The resources concerned were already in place, and CPC had agreed that they were needed. Furthermore, the Committee would have to act on the statement of programme budget implications concerning the mandates stemming from the World Conference on Human Rights.

15. Under section 22 the Advisory Committee had erred in rejecting the proposal to shift the posts of heads of mission in the least developed countries to the regular budget. Since there had been a twofold real increase in expenditure by UNHCR since 1989, the proposed new posts should be included in the regular budget. The same argument applied to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. CPC had concluded that the allocated resources were the minimum required. The posts proposed by ACABQ for deletion had been authorized for the biennium 1992-1993, and any cuts would have adverse consequences for the Department.

16. Mrs. GOICOCHEA (Cuba) said that in its budget proposals the Secretariat had disregarded the General Assembly's decision on priorities contained in resolution 45/253. The Cuban delegation endorsed the comments by other delegations on the question of priorities; the proposals for part VI compared unfavourably with those made for the sections on economic and social development. They should be assessed not in terms of absolute volume of resources but of the percentage of the budget which they represented.

(Mrs. Goicochea, Cuba)

Section 21, in particular, had also been unfairly treated in the previous budget.

17. The Advisory Committee had not made a recommendation on section 21 because it had not received the additional information requested from the Secretariat concerning the redeployment, conversion and creation of posts. That information was essential for the discussion of the question in the informal negotiations, and Cuba would be unable to approve any appropriations for new posts without it.

18. Some of the proposals, in section 21.3 for example, appeared to establish a linkage between economic and social development and human rights. Since it would be wrong for any kind of conditionality to be created, the Secretariat must remove all doubt concerning its treatment of the matter. The Secretariat also seemed to be proposing to change the structure of the Centre for Human Rights according to its own perception of the Centre's function. However, any changes must be consistent with the decisions taken by Member States, and Cuba could not support any activities based only on the Secretariat's perception.

19. The proposals contained in section 21.8 for the distribution of resources among the subprogrammes were selective and did not give sufficient importance to certain subprogrammes, in particular subprogramme 2. The Secretariat had not taken into account the concern stated by many delegations in CPC during its evaluation of the human rights programme. It should submit alternative proposals for consideration in the informal negotiations. Furthermore, very few resources were allocated to the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, and the appropriation for the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights showed negative growth. The Secretariat did not seem to be taking fully into account the universal and interrelated nature of all human rights. The failure to mention in section 21.9 the Working Group on the Right to Development was surely an oversight.

20. It was regrettable that section 21.20 made no mention of the consent or request of the State concerned in connection with fact-finding missions. With regard to the activities described in section 21.22, the Cuban delegation did not understand the reference in paragraph 1 (b) (ii) to the handling of communications that fell outside existing procedures.

21. There were references in section 21 and other sections to links with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. Cuba hoped that the draft resolution on the item would place a specific limit on NGO activities.

22. Cuba fully supported subprogramme 2 on elimination and prevention of discrimination and protection of minorities and vulnerable groups, especially in view of the increase in racial discrimination and discrimination against minorities in one group of countries. The activities should be more clearly described in the budget proposals.

23. The advisory services for operational activities described in paragraph 5 (a) of section 21.25 applied to only one area of human rights. The

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Secretariat should submit proposals concerning economic, social and cultural rights. With regard to activity 1 (Parliamentary services) in paragraph 21.26, the reports to the General Assembly on the new international humanitarian order should be transferred to section 23 because resolution 47/106, which provided the mandate for the activity, had been adopted under item 96 on refugee questions. With regard to the specialized outside expertise referred to in paragraph 21.28, use should be made of the Subcommission's own experts.

24. Cuba supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee concerning section 22A and was in general agreement with the recommendations concerning section 23. However, it was puzzled by the fact that the missions referred to in paragraph 23.9 (c) concerned mainly North America. Why should there be regional selectivity in such activities? The Secretariat should also explain what it understood by the concept of humanitarian diplomacy and indicate the resolutions which provided the mandate for the activities mentioned in paragraph 23.18.

25. Cuba refused on procedural grounds to approve any resources for the activities connected with the removal, control and banning of mines described in paragraph 23.19. The relevant resolution had been adopted only at the current session of the General Assembly, so that the budget proposals must have been drawn up before a mandate existed. The activities should be financed in accordance with the procedure for use of the contingency fund.

26. Mr. GRANT (United States of America) said that his delegation believed that the growth of the United Nations regular budget should be kept in check, and therefore, often agreed with the recommendations of ACABQ. However, since the United Nations currently must set priorities and redeploy resources, it could not agree with ACABQ recommendations concerning section 23. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs should be strengthened, and the four Professional posts recommended for elimination in paragraph VI.11 of the ACABQ report should be retained. With regard to section 21, his delegation strongly supported the Secretary-General's proposed budget increase, for activities relating to human rights, an area which was clearly deserving of more resources.

27. Mr. JADMANI (Pakistan) said that the Secretary-General required adequate resources in order to carry out mandated activities under part VI of the programme budget, to which his delegation attached great importance. ACABQ had been unable to make any recommendations on section 21 and considered those activities to be provisional. His delegation hoped that the Secretariat would be able to justify appropriately the resources required.

28. With regard to section 22A, the proposed staffing of chiefs of missions for the designated least developed countries should be charged to the regular budget.

29. Turning to section 23, his delegation underscored the need for adequate resources for the newly established Department of Humanitarian Affairs. Given the unprecedented growth in the number and magnitude of humanitarian

(Mr. Jadmani, Pakistan)

emergencies, a reduction in staffing could affect its operations and undermine efforts to streamline procedures and make the Department more responsive to those needs.

30. Mr. APTSIAURI (Georgia) said that his delegation supported the proposed financing of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. Humanitarian activities had taken on increasing importance in the new political and economic situation, when newly independent States such as his own faced many problems. Furthermore, in his report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General had stated that he considered humanitarian affairs one of the most important fields of United Nations activity. His delegation welcomed the draft resolution on the improvement of the monitoring and coordination of humanitarian assistance operations and joined its sponsors. Such problems could not be solved without the necessary number of experienced staff. His delegation suggested that the section on the Department of Humanitarian Affairs should be adopted without any change.

31. Mr. JU Kuilin (China) said that, with regard to section 21 of the programme budget, his delegation agreed with the views already expressed by Egypt, Uganda and Cuba. Political, development and humanitarian issues should be treated equally, especially as far as resources were concerned.

32. With regard to the staffing of the Centre for Human Rights, equitable geographical distribution should be taken into account, with particular attention being given to recruitment from developing countries. His delegation also requested clarification of the provisional estimates referred to in paragraph VI.2 of the report of ACABQ (A/48/7).

33. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), responding to questions regarding section 21, said that the Secretariat was developing new methodology for the treatment of resources for perennial activities. Section 21 had included provisional activities which had a legislative mandate or which would be approved eventually, in accordance with a system developed and approved by the General Assembly. For example, decisions of the Commission on Human Rights that were to be endorsed by the Economic and Social Council were reflected. The Secretary-General had also included activities pending decisions of Main Committees of the General Assembly. In the case of a major event such as the World Conference on Human Rights, the Secretariat had prepared a statement of programme budget implications that would come before the Committee.

34. The distribution of resources among subprogrammes was based on a well-defined justification and did not represent a "top-down" approach. Some subprogrammes, such as advisory services, relied more heavily than others on extrabudgetary resources. Subprogramme 2, for instance, had the highest percentage of extrabudgetary funding. He regretted that, owing to a technical error, paragraph 21.9 of the proposed programme budget contained no mention of the Working Group on the Right to Development, which would be included in the final version.

(Mr. Takasu)

35. Fact-finding services referred to assistance provided to Special Rapporteurs and working groups of the Commission on Human Rights, as endorsed by the Economic and Social Council. The Secretary-General could not appoint a Special Rapporteur or establish a working group without the approval of the Member State concerned, and advisory services could be provided only at the request of a Government. The list of such services was indicative and not exhaustive. It should be noted that the Committee for Programme and Coordination had recommended approval of section 21 of the proposed programme budget in paragraph 185 of its report (A/48/16, part II).

36. With regard to section 23, the Advisory Committee's recommendation would eliminate a number of posts requested by the Secretary-General. One of the posts, that of the chief of the External Relations and Information Unit (at the D-1 level), was crucial to the effective flow of information and had been redeployed during the current biennium. Two P-2 posts were at Headquarters, one in that Unit and the other in the Policy Planning and Evaluation Unit. Those posts had been redeployed and were encumbered. Another D-1 post affected by the ACABQ recommendation was that of the chief of the Complex Emergencies Branch at Geneva, which performed a vital function. The legislative mandate for humanitarian diplomacy was to be found in a number of General Assembly resolutions.

37. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), replying to the question asked by the representative of China, said that, in his introductory statement, he had indicated that table I in the first report of the Advisory Committee (A/48/7) contained provisional deletions. Where it was obvious to the Advisory Committee that the Secretary-General's proposals were not firmly based on a legislative mandate, it had recommended a provisional deletion. For example, it had recommended the provisional deletion of $3.6 million for integrated offices pending a decision by the Second Committee. Table II contained provisional inclusions in areas that would be affected by reports of the Secretary-General. For example, a provisional inclusion had been made for the Department for Development Support and Management Services pending the decision on further reports of the Secretary-General on the integration of the Office for Project Services into that Department.

38. With regard to the statement by the delegation of Canada on the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, where ACABQ had felt that it was not in a position to recommend the proposed transfer from budgetary to extrabudgetary resources, according to the present arrangement between the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General, all regular budget posts were at UNHCR headquarters and were for functions such as coordination, management, supervision and policy guidance. If UNHCR wished additional regular budget posts at Headquarters to perform operational and support functions, there was nothing to prevent it from making such a request and justifying it. The Advisory Committee, however, had not felt that there was sufficient justification to warrant change in the existing arrangement.

39. Mrs. GOICOCHEA (Cuba) thanked the Controller for his replies and said that her delegation would comment further on the methodology used in connection with perennial activities during the negotiations on the relevant resolutions. The extrabudgetary resources allocated to subprogramme 2 under section 21 (44.3 per cent) seemed inordinately high compared to those allocated to subprogramme 1.

40. Her delegation was pleased that the omission of the Working Group on the Right to Development had been a mere oversight. It was unfortunate that one of the resolutions before the Committee contained a reference to "humanitarian diplomacy" without defining the concept. Consideration had to be given to the potential budgetary implications of such vague references. Her delegation reserved the right to comment on the Controller's other remarks in informal consultations, where it hoped to receive a response to its questions concerning posts and the possible redistribution of resources in certain subprogrammes.

41. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) reassured the Cuban representative that the term "humanitarian diplomacy" had been deleted from the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 adopted by the General Assembly.

42. The CHAIRMAN said that, in view of the comments made during the debate, he proposed that the Committee should suspend consideration of the sections falling under part VI and revert to them after the Committee had concluded informal consultations on the relevant issues. Likewise, decisions on the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) (A/48/16 (Part II)) regarding part VI would be taken at a later stage.

43. It was so decided.

Part VII. Public information

Part VIII. Common support services

44. The CHAIRMAN said that total estimates proposed by the Secretary-General for part VII amounted to $135,789,100 and for part VIII, $927,013,500. The Advisory Committee had recommended appropriations totalling $131,050,100 for part VII and $898,151,900 for part VIII.

45. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) said that the increase in the resources of the Department of Public Information for the biennium 1994-1995 reflected the transfer of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and certain publication functions to the Department. In fact, there had been negative real growth in the Department's traditional activities, even with the provision of nearly $2.2 million to service information activities for major United Nations conferences. The Department's staff costs of $101 million, or 75 per cent of the estimate, reflected its labour-intensive nature. Its general operating expenses, which were largely non-discretionary, reflected a reduction of 20 staff members. Specific reductions under general operating expenses would have a serious infrastructural and programmatic impact on the Department. The performance report for the current biennium showed $3 million in additional

(Mr. Takasu)

operating requirements over the approved appropriations. The Advisory Committee recommended a total reduction in the Department's budget without taking into account the technical adjustment of $2.7 million for turnover recosting. The most significant reduction under general operating expenses and general temporary assistance ($1.1 million) was proposed under contractual services on the ground that a greater proportion of information materials should be translated and printed internally. However, the excess capacity of the Office of Conference Services in that area was limited and did not always coincide with the printing and distribution schedules of the Department of Public Information. Delays in the internal printing of time-sensitive materials could be damaging.

46. As the Secretary-General had stated, the Department of Administration and Management would play a crucial role in 1994 in the areas of financial control, human resources management, conference services and the efficient operation of the General Services. The human resources management programme, whose key component was training, was of particular importance. The Secretariat was keenly aware of the Advisory Committee's observations concerning the training programme, including training activities in the peace-keeping operations, which had already received contributions from Member States or from the Support Account for Peace-keeping Operations. The training programme emphasized the training or retraining of staff in new skills and the upgrading of existing skills, particularly in the areas of management, supervision and computer applications.

47. The Secretariat's proposals on training also took into account the introduction of new technology, staff turnover, mobility and the assignment of staff between duty stations and departments. He expressed appreciation to the Advisory Committee for supporting the Secretary-General's view that training was a top priority in facilitating the process of change in the Organization. In that connection, under section 27, the Secretary-General had included approximately $5 million to cover the cost of agreed separation of staff. The placement of staff members following the restructuring would be a problem. The decline in extrabudgetary resources available in the economic and social sectors would inevitably have an impact on the regular budget as a result of agreed separations.

48. Under section 25E, the Secretary-General had proposed abolishing 19 of 23 translation and editorial posts which had been redeployed outside the Office of Conference Services during the biennium 1992-1993 (para. 25E.9). The Advisory Committee had recommended that those posts should be re-established without increasing the staffing table. The Secretariat did not really believe that the Advisory Committee's recommendation was the most cost-effective solution. The Office of Conference Services had operated without those posts throughout the current biennium and it was anticipated that the acquisition of computers in the biennium 1994-1995 as part of the technological innovations programme would further boost productivity. The Secretary-General's views were borne out by the productivity statistics given in paragraph 25E.20 of the proposed programme budget.

(Mr. Takasu)

49. An across-the-budget review of priorities had led to the proposal to eliminate a total of 78 Professional and high-level posts, offset in large measure by the proposed increase of such posts in higher-priority areas. Further redeployment of Professional posts would have an adverse impact on the implementation of other programmes.

50. Concerning telecommunications, he said that the one-time investment in the proposed United Nations satellite network would be more than offset by significant, tangible savings and its effectiveness in ensuring the safety of staff members. The Secretariat had submitted a report on the matter to the Advisory Committee in early 1993 and an update in October 1993, which the Advisory Committee had been unable to review. Consequently, it had recommended a provisional revision. Postponing the implementation of such a vital project would not only increase the current commercial telecommunications costs paid by the Organization but would also jeopardize the security of staff away from Headquarters. A provisional appropriation - subject to the Committee's review of the Secretary-General's report in early 1994 - would be far preferable to a provisional revision.

51. Mr. STÖCKL (Rapporteur of the Committee for Programme and Coordination) presented the conclusions and recommendations of CPC on part VII of the proposed programme budget. In particular, he drew attention to paragraphs 49 and paragraphs 207 to 222 of the report of CPC (A/48/16 (Part II)). Paragraph 49, although it was included under the comments on section 1 of the proposed programme budget, was relevant to the Department of Public Information and referred to preparations for the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. He read out paragraphs 219 to 222. During the discussion of the proposed programme budget, many delegations had pointed to the need for a more effective evaluation of the work of the Department of Public Information.

52. Mr. MADDENS (Belgium), speaking of behalf of the European Union, expressed the Union's astonishment at the proposals concerning the Department of Public Information. There had been no in-depth review of the Department's management methods during the current budgetary exercise. Surely, some posts in the overstaffed Department could be redeployed to other activities. As the Union had already stated in the Fourth Committee debate on the report of the Committee on Information, the Department's resources could be utilized more effectively and with greater flexibility, particularly if the demand for certain publications was correctly assessed. The proliferation of publications gave cause for concern; the policy on publications should be reviewed. The European Union supported the recommendation contained in paragraph I.10 of the report of the Advisory Committee on the allocation of resources for preparations for the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

53. It was disappointing that the Department of Administration and Management, the largest department of the United Nations, was having difficulty in rationalizing its structures. The Union supported the recommendation of CPC, which questioned the programmatic justification for increasing the resources allocated to the Department. Those funds could easily be redeployed to the priority sectors identified in the budget outline. In that respect, the Union

(Mr. Maddens, Belgium)

also agreed with the CPC recommendations. The proposal to establish an additional level of management at the assistant secretary-general level between the Under-Secretary-General of the Department and the chiefs of its four departments did not seem to be in keeping with General Assembly resolution 47/212.

54. Like the Advisory Committee, the Union was not convinced of the wisdom of abolishing 19 posts in the translation and editorial services. In view of the significant growth in the workload of those services, it supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation to restore the posts without increasing the staffing table. The introduction of new technologies would be useful, but, in the short term, would not result in savings.

55. Lastly, the Union supported the statement by the Advisory Committee contained in paragraph VIII.16 of its report concerning the Purchase and Transportation Service, including its concern about understaffing with regard to both the total number of posts and managerial posts in the Service. The General Assembly should implement the Advisory Committee's recommendation on strengthening the Service's management and control capacity through the redeployment of resources.

56. Mr. WOLFFHECHEL (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries - Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark - said that, in view of the large budget proposed for the Department of Public Information, the Nordic countries welcomed the restructuring of the Department and stressed the need for transparency in its activities and its budgetary requirements. They expected that restructuring would lead to greater flexibility and that changing conditions (for example, in South Africa or the Middle East) would be reflected in the Department's spending pattern. Redundant activities in publishing and other areas should be discontinued.

57. The Department's staff costs were considerable despite the proposed reductions. In the belief that savings could be realized across the board on other items under section 24, including contractual services, the Nordic countries supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee in that regard.

58. The Nordic countries also agreed with the Advisory Committee's suggestions to reduce general operating expenses on hospitality functions, furniture and equipment, and supplies and materials. The United Nations information centres should be able to meet local needs and demands for information about the United Nations system. The Nordic countries favoured a regional approach but also looked forward to the findings of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) on the role of the National Officer category throughout the United Nations common system.

59. Mr. ESKRIGGE (New Zealand), speaking also on behalf of Canada and Australia, said that the level of resources allocated for public information activities was no longer supportable when the United Nations had to address serious issues of human rights, humanitarian assistance, peacemaking and

(Mr. Eskrigge, New Zealand)

peace-keeping, and international economic and social cooperation. Even though the Department of Public Information was provided with $136 million and over 800 posts, representing 5 per cent of the entire budget and 8 per cent of all posts, more than was devoted to human rights and humanitarian affairs combined, it was a marginal player in terms of how public perceptions of the United Nations were shaped.

60. The recent streamlining of the Department seemed to have had little practical effect. The Organization needed a public information service that focused on high profile issues having some immediacy, a service that dealt with the international media, where DPI had limited impact. Further streamlining would allow resources to be released to the priority areas identified by the Secretary-General.

61. Common support services absorbed one third of budget funding and over one third of posts. The Organization had failed to reduce the overall number of staff in that area despite significant expenditure on modern technology. In the Office of Conference Services changes in translation practices could lead to a reduction in typing posts, and his delegation supported the Secretary-General's proposal to abolish the 19 posts referred to by the Advisory Committee in paragraph VIII.22 of its report.

62. He noted with concern the proposal to assign two Assistant Secretaries-General to the Department of Administration and Management while retaining the Under-Secretary-General post and four Director posts. He would appreciate an explanation of the added layer of management which that represented. In view of the reduced responsibilities of the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management, there seemed to be scope for a reduction in the number of posts assigned to it.

63. Mr. SERME (Burkina Faso) said that his delegation supported the proposal to convert 40 local level posts at United Nations information centres to the National Officer level. Further, he requested a detailed list of information centres and a breakdown of posts and resources by centre.

64. Mr. CHUINKAM (Cameroon) said that information centres played an important role in a changing world, particularly in developing countries, where there was a need to justify contributions to the United Nations budget. He was surprised that the Secretary-General had proposed the abolition of certain posts at information centres, which, rather, needed additional resources. He welcomed the views of the Advisory Committee on the Department of Administration and Management, and agreed that the increase proposed for that department was not justified.

65. Mr. NDOBOLI (Uganda) said that his delegation supported an increase in resources for DPI. The budget proposals for DPI did not reflect real growth, the apparent growth relating in fact to the transfer to DPI of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and the holding of conferences.

(Mr. Ndoboli, Uganda)

66. Information centres played an important role in creating awareness, and in that connection he supported the conversion of 40 local level posts to the National Officer level.

67. The distribution of resources among budget sections was not balanced, since a few sections had absorbed the largest share of resources, while OCS and DPI suffered. For example, contractual translation and printing services should be used only for overload, and steps should be taken to strengthen in-house capacity in those areas. His delegation had not agreed with the downgrading of the Department of Conference Services. He fully supported the Advisory Committee regarding the restoration of 19 posts in OCS.

68. Ms. SAEKI (Japan) said that it was important to ensure that there was no duplication between the information activities of DPI and those of individual departments. She asked what the budgetary impact had been of the transfer to the Executive Office of the Secretary-General of the Office of the Spokesman. Increases in the area of common support costs should be minimized and resources allocated to other areas. Adequate resources should, however, be allocated for training, since that would improve efficiency and effectiveness. Proper attention must be paid to security and to the introduction of new technology, including in the communications sector. Lastly, regarding conference services, consideration should be given to the most efficient mix of regular budget posts and temporary assistance.

69. Mrs. GOICOCHEA (Cuba) said that the scope of section 25 was such that the Secretary-General must be required to seek the concurrence of the Advisory Committee before transferring resources between subsections.

70. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) said that the United Nations had always taken a unified approach to information services and had established a department to deal exclusively with information activities rather than having individual departments conduct their own information programmes. Regarding the level of resources allocated to DPI compared with humanitarian affairs and peace-keeping operations, the figures were somewhat misleading in that the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Peace-keeping Operations had core staffs funded under the regular budget, with the majority of staff being funded from other resources. The resources for DPI were all included in the regular budget. Of the posts indicated in the proposed programme budget, the Committee would note that some 180 related to activities transferred to DPI, including the Dag Hammarskjöld Library. In any event the Secretary-General was proposing some reductions in the area of public information, and would continue to keep the activity under review.

71. Regarding the Department of Administration and Management, it had been decided to establish a structure headed by an Under-Secretary-General, supported by two Assistant Secretaries-General, in view of the great responsibilities of that department. The large number of posts in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management reflected the scope of the Department's activities, and, in fact, included posts relating to the administration of justice as well as to the Management Advisory Service. The

(Mr. Takasu)

latter would be transferred to the Office for Inspections and Investigations. The direct support staff for the Under-Secretary-General numbered only six Professionals and five General Service, representing the minimum necessary.

72. With respect to conference services, the Secretary-General had compensated for a number of vacancies in translation through the use of temporary assistance. He was now proposing to regularize the situation through the abolition of 19 posts and the continued use of temporary assistance. The Advisory Committee's recommendation that the posts should be re-established without increasing the staffing table would simply cause anomalies.

73. United Nations information centres played an important role, and the Secretary-General had taken steps to improve their efficiency by combining their functions with those of UNDP offices. As a result certain reductions had been proposed.

74. Concerning the comment that general operating expenditures within DPI were too high, particularly for hospitality, he noted that the total amount involved was only $67,900, including some $20,000 for a training programme and similar activities and some $47,000 for the Office of the Spokesman.

75. Commenting on security, he noted that guided tours had been resumed at Headquarters since the beginning of December. The Secretary-General had requested $3.1 million in temporary assistance for security purposes at Headquarters in view of recent terrorist threats. The Advisory Committee had approved the addition of 28 temporary security staff, the cost being covered from vacancies. Given the continued risk of terrorist attack, it was expected that that arrangement would need to be continued in the forthcoming biennium.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
37th meeting
held on
Saturday, 11 December 1993
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 37th MEETING

Chairman: Mrs. EMERSON (Portugal)
(Vice-Chairman)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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AGENDA ITEM 123: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995 (continued)

First reading (continued)

Part IX. Jointly financed activities and special expenses

Part X. Staff assessment

Part XI. Capital expenditures

Income section 1. Income from staff assessment

Income section 2. General income

Income section 3. Services to the public

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/48/SR.37
28 February 1994
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

93-82972 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 124: IMPROVING THE FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.5/48/L.9

1. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to draft resolution A/C.5/48/L.9, entitled "Improving the financial situation of the United Nations".

2. Draft resolution A/C.5/48/L.9 was adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 123: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995 (continued) (A/48/6, A/48/7, A/48/16 (Parts I and II), A/48/32/Rev.1/Add.1; A/C.5/48/9 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/C.5/48/26, A/C.5/48/51)

First reading (continued)

Part IX. Jointly financed activities and special expenses

Part X. Staff assessment

Part XI. Capital expenditures

3. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider parts IX, X and XI of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995. The total appropriations requested by the Secretary-General amounted to US$ 64,714,600 for part IX, US$ 448,196,900 for part X and US$ 91,803,700 for part XI. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) had recommended appropriations totalling US$ 57,984,000 for part IX, US$ 402,925,000 for part X and US$ 83,148,400 for part XI.

4. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) said that the appropriation requested under section 27 for contributions to after-service health insurance amounted to approximately US$ 28 million, divided among the health insurance plans administered at Headquarters (US$ 22 million, of which approximately US$ 19 million corresponded to the health insurance subsidies for retirees residing in the United States of America), Geneva (US$ 5.5 million) and Vienna (US$ 500,000) and the plan for locally recruited staff (US$ 200,000). The dramatic escalation of health-care costs in recent years had placed a greater financial burden on both the Organization and its staff. However, health insurance protection for staff members was a key element of the overall compensation and conditions of service of the international civil service. Adequate health protection was essential if the United Nations wished to maintain its standing as a good employer and was particularly important at a time when staff members were being called upon to serve in extremely difficult circumstances. An appropration of US$ 5.8 million had also been requested under section 27 to cover the cost of agreed separations of staff members during the biennium.

(Mr. Takasu)

5. The Organization needed modern and effective management tools. The introduction of the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS), for which appropriations had been requested under section 29 of the proposed programme budget, represented one of the most important reforms the Organization had undertaken to rationalize its work methods and improve the management of its human and financial resources. The Secretariat hoped that the system would soon become operational and appreciated the position taken by the Advisory Committee regarding appropriations for the project.

6. An appropriation of US$ 2.85 million had been requested under section 30 to finance the installation of earth stations for communication satellites in three headquarters cities. The Secretary-General had submitted a report on that question (A/C.5/48/11), and an executive summary had been circulated to members of the Committee. Although the Advisory Committee had considered the request to be premature, he was nevertheless requesting provisional approval of the appropriation in order not to undermine the establishment of a satellite-based global telecommunications network, which could result in cost savings while ensuring the safety of staff members around the world.

7. The appropriation requested under section 30 for alterations and major maintenance was justified in view of the advanced age of many United Nations properties, the need to meet modern safety and environmental standards and the rising demand for additional office accommodations. Further deferral of maintenance work and renovations would lead to even greater expenditure in the future. In that context, a master plan for United Nations facilities in New York and an action plan for renovations were absolutely essential.

8. Ms. SAEKI (Japan) said that in view of the Organization's financial difficulties, expenditures for construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance of United Nations facilities (section 30) should be minimized by procedures such as the submission of proposals for major projects to the Advisory Committee for prior authorization. With regard to special expenses (section 27), she hoped that the necessary agreed separations would take place.

9. With regard to the proposed programme budget for 1994-1995 as a whole, Japan hoped that the final figures, including programme budget implications, would show zero growth, although adequate resources should be allocated to priority areas. Her delegation regarded across-the-board reductions in staff costs, travel and general operating expenditures as appropriate.

10. The new vacancy management system would ensure more flexible deployment of human resources through the maintenance of a pool of vacant posts; the Advisory Committee's authorization should be sought when resources were transferred between sections within authorized budget levels. Her delegation wished to return to the issue of recosting in informal consultations. Lastly, she welcomed the ending of the recruitment freeze and said that the reclassifications proposed in the Secretary-General's report should be considered as soon as possible.

11. Mr. ORR (Canada), referring to paragraph 26.62, noted an apparent discrepancy between the number of work-months required for the implementation of the programme of the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ) for the biennium (72) and the number of posts provided for (6). He requested clarification of the matter. In addition, as there seemed to be some overlap in the work done by CCAQ and the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) on personnel matters, he wondered whether there was any plan to rationalize the activities of those bodies.

12. His delegation wished to know what effect the implementation of the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) would have on the International Computing Centre (ICC) at Geneva and whether the United Nations would still need to use the Centre's services once IMIS was in operation.

13. With regard to section 27, he said that in view of the fact that health insurance premiums in the New York area were to increase by about 4 per cent over two years it was astonishing that the recosting of after-service health insurance coverage involved an increase of roughly 15 per cent a year.

14. He commended the Secretariat on the excellent presentation of IMIS in section 29 and particularly on table 29.4, which was extremely useful. His delegation continued to support the introduction of IMIS and considered that the 20 per cent overrun on the provisional budget already noted was acceptable, given the magnitude of the project. On the other hand, it did not find the cost-benefit analysis of the optical disk storage and retrieval system very convincing and would prefer to be given a detailed estimate, with figures of the expected benefits of the system.

15. With regard to section 30, and more specifically with regard to the $17 million required for construction in 1994-1995, he wished to know whether account had been taken of the important item which appeared in the United Nations financial report for the biennium ended in 1991 under the heading "Projects of a multi-year nature: United Nations Construction-in-progress Fund". His delegation hoped to hear further details in informal consultations.

16. His delegation understood the Advisory Committee's reservations regarding the proposed global satellite telecommunications network, particularly since the document introducing the project was confusing, to say the least. He wished to know what the useful life of the proposed system would be and wondered why it was necessary to have three satellite earth stations, even though the main traffic would be between two regions, namely North America and Europe-Africa.

17. As for the appropriations under section 30 for alterations and improvements, he recognized that, given its age, the Headquarters building needed extensive work. Some of the proposed expenditure for that purpose, however, seemed excessive, particularly the $400,000 earmarked for the replacement of security booths at the entrance to the building.

18. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), replying to the question from the representative of Canada regarding paragraph 26.62, confirmed that the programme involved apportioning the work among six posts - three in the Professional category and three in the General Service category - over two years, for a total of

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144 work-months. As for the respective roles of CCAQ and ICSC, he drew attention to paragraphs 26.52 and 26.53, which outlined the terms of reference of CCAQ. No duplication of effort was involved: ICSC determined the programme of work, while CCAQ analysed the situation and prepared the data that were to be submitted to ICSC for consideration.

19. With regard to the effects of the introduction of IMIS on CCI, the Centre would continue to be responsible for maintenance and technical support services. Indeed, in addition to the United Nations itself, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Labour Organization, several specialized agencies were displaying a growing interest in the Centre. It would be recalled in that connection that CCI charged the United Nations only for the computer hours and services actually used. As for after-service health insurance, premiums were calculated on the basis of trends observed not only in the New York area, but throughout the world. He promised to present more detailed statistics at the next round of informal consultations.

20. He referred the representative of Canada to the Secretary-General's latest report on the satellite telecommunications system and explained that the $2.8 million required included the costs of installing satellite earth stations at Nairobi, at the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and at the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, in addition to those already existing at New York, Geneva, Bangkok and Addis Ababa. If the decision was deferred, the United Nations would faced increased expenditure for telephones, faxes and so forth. Moreover, telephone links with some regions were not always reliable.

21. The CHAIRMAN said she would take it that the Committee wished to consider sections 26 to 30 as a whole in informal consultations.

22. It was so decided.

Income section 1. Income from staff assessment

Income section 2. General income

Income section 3. Services to the public

23. The CHAIRMAN said she would take it that the Committee wished to consider income sections 1 to 3 in informal consultations.

24. It was so decided.

25. Mr. MERIFIELD (Canada) said that his delegation considered that the Committee must be given at least 24 hours to examine the financial statements and the budget performance report before reaching a decision on them, as had been agreed the previous year.

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
38th meeting
held on
Monday, 13 December 1993
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 38th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HADID (Algeria)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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AGENDA ITEM 123: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995 (continued)

General debate (continued)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/48/L.6 concerning agenda item 72

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/48/L.19 concerning agenda item 82

Programme budget implications of draft resolutions A/C.1/48/L.40 and L.41 concerning agenda items 66 and 73

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/48/SR.38
23 February 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

93-82984 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 123: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995 (continued) (A/48/6, A/48/7, A/48/16 (Parts I and II) and A/48/32/Rev.1/Add.1; A/C.5/48/9 and Corr.1 and Add.1 and A/C.5/48/26)

General debate (continued)

1. Mr. LOZINSKY (Russian Federation) said that his delegation would have preferred to have more time to consider the budget proposals in detail, and he welcomed the Controller's assurances that the Secretary-General and the Secretariat would do everything possible to prevent a repetition of the situation. The problem of late documentation was hindering the work of the United Nations and should be given serious consideration.

2. His delegation welcomed the efforts to make the proposed programme budget and effective means for analysis and decision-making by the General Assembly. However, much more remained to be done. In particular, part I should be an independent document containing exhaustive information on the basis of which the General Assembly could adopt decisions. Part II should include a detailed discussion of, and justification for, the general provisions of part I. The methodology for drafting the budget should be finalized in the course of the preparation of the proposed programme budget for 1996-1997.

3. His delegation welcomed the fact that the budget highlighted such areas as human rights, humanitarian affairs and the administrative management of peace-keeping operations and redistribution of resources towards those priorities. The priority status of those programmes would be more clear-cut if programmes that were obsolete or of marginal usefulness were eliminated and the resulting resources redeployed to priority activities, especially since the proposed budget included a number of activities that would soon lose their relevance in the light of the evolving situation in various parts of the world. The Secretariat should react quickly to the changing international situation and submit the necessary proposals to the General Assembly in a timely manner.

4. The proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 reflected a rate of real growth of 1 per cent as compared with the preceding biennium. Moreover, the proposed level of the expenditure section of the budget exceeded by $47 million the parameters of the proposed programme budget outline approved in General Assembly resolution 47/213. Those parameters should be the ceiling for the Organization's expenditure for the forthcoming biennium, and his delegation fully supported the relevant recommendation of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC).

5. The reduction of the budget was not an end in itself. It was necessary to seek practical ways of ensuring the optimum use of human and material resources by promoting the maximum efficiency of all Secretariat units. In that regard, the widespread introduction of the latest technologies in various Secretariat units and the sizeable outlays for that purpose should increase productivity and efficiency and result in a redistribution of the human resources. In that

(Mr. Lozinsky, Russian Federation)

regard, his delegation questioned the reason for requesting 68 new posts under the regular budget, and considered that each request should be closely scrutinized.

6. Every effort should be made to strengthen and improve the mobility and rotation of United Nations staff within the Secretariat and the regional commissions. His delegation could not agree with the attempts to revive the previous system of departmental promotions, which entailed permanent reclassifications and requests for new and higher-level posts. His delegation agreed with the proposal of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) to defer consideration of the requests for reclassification and consider the matter on the basis of a further submission by the Secretary-General that would contain adequate justification.

7. The time had come for radical changes in the methods of staffing the Secretariat; competitive examinations, open to internal and external candidates, should be held for all vacant posts, and a new system for evaluating the performance of staff members should be introduced in order to get rid of "dead wood". In that regard, his delegation took note of the Secretary-General's intention to end the moratorium on the recruitment of external candidates once the budget had been adopted, and hoped that that step would be taken after all opportunities for making maximum use of existing human resources had been exhausted.

8. The problems concerning the relationship between the outline and the level of the budget and nominal and real growth called for serious efforts to eliminate the shortcomings in the budget methodology . There should be clarity and consistency in the definition of recurrent and non-recurrent expenditure in calculating real budget growth. A close analysis of the "methodological musical chairs" of recent years gave the impression that methodology was sometimes changed in order to justify budget growth.

9. With regard to recosting, his delegation shared the view of ACABQ regarding the adjustment of inflation and exchange rates for the forthcoming biennium. It agreed with the Advisory Committee's proposal to increase to 6 per cent the turnover rate for the Professional and higher categories.

10. It was necessary to establish a correct relationship between the regular budget and extrabudgetary resources. Policy-making bodies should exercise more control in that area, and there should be clear-cut criteria for fair reimbursement to the regular budget of support costs for extrabudgetary activities. Extrabudgetary resources constituted a major additional source of financing for a number of programmes. In order to determine how best to allocate regular budget resources, it was necessary to see, within the programme budget, the amount of resources that a programme required. A more accurate assessment and allocation of all resources would help improve understanding between Member States and the Secretariat with regard to the needs of the Organization. On the other hand, the Organization's peace-keeping activities should be financed from the regular budget. It was unacceptable that entire units of the Secretariat were financed from other sources.

(Mr. Lozinsky, Russian Federation)

11. Many of the recommendations contained in the Advisory Committee's first report (A/48/7) did not reflect the position of his delegation. However, in the final analysis, those recommendations had been the result of a reasonable compromise. Experience showed that ACABQ recommendations were always balanced and their adoption never impeded programme activities. His delegation was therefore prepared to support the Advisory Committee's recommendations as a whole. Moreover, unless the recommendations of ACABQ were adopted, his delegation would not be able to agree to the proposed budget.

12. Mr. BARIMANI (Islamic Republic of Iran) observed that the establishment of three new departments dealing with social and economic issues would provide the coordination, policy guidance, research and analysis and technical cooperation so vital to the developing countries. The division of labour among the new departments, however, needed to be clarified, and they must be adequately funded. There was no clear indication in the proposed programme budget that the current restructuring would actually satisfy General Assembly resolution 41/213 and meet programme requirements. Also, it was not clear whether the incorporation of the Office for Project Services of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) into the Department for Development Support and Management Services would guarantee the former's semi-autonomous and self-financing status. In addition, it was urgent for the Secretary-General to fill the post of Executive Director of the International Trade Centre without further delay.

13. Real growth of 1 per cent in the proposed programme budget seemed reasonable in the light of the expansion of United Nations activities. The expectation, however, had been that the resources would be allocated equally to all five of the priorities under the medium-term plan, yet the economic development of developing countries, in particular, had not been assigned the appropriate level of resources, a matter which should be remedied.

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/48/L.6 concerning agenda item 72 (A/C.5/48/32)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/48/L.19 concerning agenda item 82 (A/C.5/48/33)

Programme budget implications of draft resolutions A/C.1/48/L.40 and L.41 concerning agenda items 66 and 73 (A/C.5/48/34)

14. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) drew attention to document A/C.5/48/32 presenting the Secretary-General's estimate of programme budget implications for the recommendations of the First Committee in draft resolution A/C.1/48/L.6, arising from paragraph 6 of that resolution. In section C of his statement, the Secretary-General outlined the activities which would be undertaken by the Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa and indicated that it would hold two meetings, one at Luanda, for five days in 1994, and another at Brazzaville, also for five days, and that in connection with those meetings, travel and subsistence would be paid to the participants and

conference-servicing costs would be covered. Those budgetary implications were outlined in section E, paragraph 12, and the full cost of the two meetings was estimated at $206,800. The Secretary-General indicated that no additional appropriation for the activities enumerated would be required since provision had been made for them in the proposed programme budget. Two other elements, however, would have to be authorized: the General Assembly would need to grant an exception to allow the meetings to be held away from established United Nations headquarters sites and also to pay for travel and subsistence costs of governmental representatives (sect. G, para. 14).

15. A similar request had been put before the Fifth Committee the previous year and ACABQ had reported on it in document A/47/4/Add.11. The Advisory Committee had not recommended granting an exception for payment of travel and subsistence costs (para. 16), but the Fifth Committee had endorsed the Secretary-General's proposals. He assumed that the Committee would be recommending the same treatment as it had done the previous year.

16. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, paragraph 13 (b), which stipulated that the Fifth Committee should as a general practice consider accepting without debate the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the financial implications of draft resolutions up to the prescribed limit of $25,000 on any one item, the Committee should take a decision on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.1/48/L.6, which would require no additional appropriations.

17. Mr. INOMATA (Japan) recalled that in its first report (A/48/7, para. II.19), the Advisory Committee had recommended reducing by $300,000 the approximately $1.4 million proposed for disarmament affairs consultancy in paragraph 3B.47 of the proposed programme budget. Yet it was Japan's understanding that the Secretariat had prepared the statements of the programme budget implications of the four draft resolutions before the Committee - A/C.1/48/L.6, L.19, L.40 and L.41 - on the assumption that the full amount would be authorized, including the contingency requirement of approximately $1.1 million for ad hoc expert groups (para. 3B.47 (b)). Moreover, in a striking departure from proper budgetary procedure, statements of programme budget implications had not been submitted to the First Committee in advance of its consideration of certain draft resolutions, including draft resolution A/C.1/48/L.41, or the related draft resolution A/C.1/48.L.18 on transparency in armaments, and it was difficult to see how the draft resolutions could have received proper consideration.

18. Since the reduction recommended by ACABQ had not been taken into account in the statements of programme budget implications, a case could be made for charging any shortfall in the proposed programme budget requirements for draft resolutions A/C.1/48/L.6, L.19 and L.41 to the contingency fund. However, should the Fifth Committee reject the ACABQ recommendation, it should recommend that the General Assembly authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in respect of amounts required for implementation of those three

(Mr. Inomata, Japan)

draft resolutions, and draft resolution A/C.1/48/L.18, and request him to report any shortfalls in his first budget performance report at the forty-ninth session.

19. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) assured the representative of Japan that established procedure had been followed throughout and the Fifth Committee had been properly advised by the Secretary-General in the statements of the programme budget implications of the four draft resolutions before the Committee as well as other related First Committee resolutions.

20. When no additional proposed programme budget requirements arose under a given draft resolution, it was normally not necessary to prepare a statement of programme budget implications. In the case of draft resolutions A/C.1/48/L.6 and L.19, statements of programme budget implications had been prepared because, although no additional requirements were foreseen, the General Assembly needed to approve the exceptions cited in paragraph 14 of document A/C.5/48/32 and paragraph 9 of document A/C.5/48/33.

21. In the case of draft resolutions A/C.1/48/L.40 and L.41, additional resource requirements did indeed arise, and consequently a statement of programme budget implications had been prepared in document A/C.5/48/34.

22. As to draft resolution A/C.1/48/L.18, which was not currently under consideration but which fell under the same section of the proposed programme budget as the four others, no statement of programme budget implications had been prepared because no additional resources were required nor were any exceptions involved.

23. As to the resources themselves, the budget requirement of approximately $1.4 million proposed in paragraph 3B.47 was the amount which the Secretary-General assumed would be needed and approved for all the scheduled and anticipated activities under section 3B.

24. Mrs. GOICOCHEA (Cuba) said that it would be helpful if the Controller could clarify whether, in considering the programme budget implications of the First Committee draft resolutions, the Fifth Committee was indeed making decisions with regard to the allocation of funds for the biennium 1994-1995 when in fact the proposed programme budget had not yet been approved.

25. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands) said that his delegation supported the recommendations of ACABQ. In its view, the potential problem was that approval of those recommendations could result in a shortfall in resources; but in such a case, it was for the Secretariat to find other ways of meeting any additional costs within existing resources.

26. Mr. ZAHID (Morocco) observed that the Committee had been informed that draft resolutions A/C.1/48/L.6 and A/C.1/48/L.19 would not give rise to any programme budget implications for 1994-1995. In both cases, the General Assembly was requested to approve a waiver of the established headquarters principle. His delegation wished to know the location of the established

(Mr. Zahid, Morocco)

headquarters for the two meetings. Furthermore, it would be useful to clarify whether the Committee was adopting a decision on waiving the headquarters principle and granting subsistence allowance and travel, or on the financial implications of the resolutions. In his delegation's view, the Committee on Conferences should be consulted with regard to the holding of meetings away from the established headquarters of the Secretariat unit concerned. It agreed that the travel and subsistence allowances should be granted, but wondered if the statement of budget programme implications was the proper context for that decision. It also hoped that the reductions proposed by ACABQ would not adversely affect the holding of those events.

27. Mr. KELLY (Ireland) said that the subject-matter of the draft resolutions was of high priority for Ireland, which therefore shared the concerns of Japan. If the Committee agreed to the recommendations of ACABQ, a possible shortfall in resources for the implementation of those resolutions could occur; the use of the contingency fund might be a solution.

28. The CHAIRMAN invited the representative of Japan to formulate a proposal in that regard.

29. Mr. INOMATA (Japan) said that, as he understood it, when calculating the programme budget implications of a draft resolution, the Secretariat assumed that the initial estimates of the Secretary-General for the relevant section would be approved. In the case before the Committee, the Advisory Committee was recommending a reduction of $300,000 for consultancy funds. The Committee thus had no accurate information on how that reduction, if approved, would affect the activities called for in the draft resolutions.

30. His delegation agreed with ACABQ that the headquarters rule should be waived and that travel expenses and daily subsistence allowances should be granted. It therefore proposed that the Secretary-General should be authorized to enter into commitments in respect of the amounts required for the implementation of the draft resolutions and to report on any shortfalls in the budget provision in the first budget performance report to be submitted at the forty-ninth session.

31. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), replying to the question put by the representative of Cuba, drew attention to paragraph 3B.47 of the proposed programme budget, where $1.4 million was requested for consultants and experts. The amount requested was based on the level of "perennial" activities. While the content of the activities might vary, the level of activity was expected to remain constant. Where a draft resolution fell under a clearly established budget category, such as the Group of Experts on the Register, or the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, the costs were already taken into account and no programme budget implications would arise. But draft resolutions A/C.1/48/L.6, L.19, L.40 and L.41, which had been adopted by the First Committee at the current session, called for activities that would come under the heading of "studies on disarmament that the General Assembly may wish to authorize" referred to in paragraph 3B.47 and would have implications for the budget.

(Mr. Takasu)

32. Replying to the question asked by Morocco, he stated that the established headquarters city was Addis Ababa, the regional centre for activities in Africa.

33. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that ACABQ and the Fifth Committee would clearly need both to review the procedure for presenting programme budget implications, and to provide guidelines governing in what cases the Secretary-General would provide statements of programme budget implications. There seemed to have been a misunderstanding in the Secretariat with regard to the inclusion of "perennial" activities in the initial budget estimate of the Secretary-General, as called for in resolution 41/213. Perennial activities were, for instance, meetings of established bodies, for which there was a clearly continuing mandate. But resolution 41/213 had not envisaged regarding ad hoc expert groups, or studies approved on an ad hoc basis, as "perennials", because those requirements could not be determined in advance. For that reason ACABQ preferred statements of programme budget implications to be submitted in such cases. Where the initial recommendations of ACABQ posed a problem for the Secretariat, the latter generally prepared a statement of programme budget implications, which made reference to the fact that the Advisory Committee had recommended the deletion of an amount from the initial budget estimates and that, in consequence, an additional amount would be required for the activity in question.

34. In document A/C.5/48/33, the Secretary-General presented programme budget implications for resolution A/C.1/48/L.19, which related to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free-zone in Africa. The additional requirements outlined in paragraph 7 covered both conference-servicing and non-conference-servicing costs. Meetings were to take place in two locations, Windhoek and Addis Ababa and it would be necessary to waive the headquarters principle. No other additional resources had been requested. The Secretary-General had submitted a similar request the previous year and the Committee had gone along with it.

35. With regard to the issue raised by Japan, in document A/C.5/48/34, the Secretary-General indicated that $184,000 would be required to cover the salary and common staff costs of one P-5 and one General Service post for ten months in 1994. The General Assembly would deal with that amount in the context of the procedures for the operation and use of the contingency fund. If the relevant recommendations of the Advisory Committee were judged to be problematical, the Secretary-General should have so indicated. Lastly, the Fifth Committee would need to examine the use of the contingency fund and give guidelines on the procedure to be followed by the Secretariat on the presentation of programme budget implications.

36. Mr. MILLER (Canada) observed that the Committee had before it the programme budget implications of a number of draft resolutions which it was being asked to add on to a budget that was still far from adoption. There was a fundamental flaw in such a procedure. Decisions on programme budget implications should not be taken in haste and delegations should be allowed a minimum of 24 hours to consider relevant statements submitted by the Secretary-General. He therefore requested that the decisions on the programme budget implications of the First

(Mr. Miller, Canada)

Committee resolutions be deferred to the next formal meeting of the Committee, and that the Bureau should take that position into account in planning the work of the remainder of the session.

37. The CHAIRMAN said that, in his view, there were only three possible courses of action. First, the Committee could choose to defer the consideration of programme budget implications until after the adoption of the budget. Second, as suggested by Japan, the Committee could authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for all programme budget implications and to report any shortfalls in the first budget performance report. That approach would of course simplify the Committee's work. Third, the Committee could adopt the recommendations of ACABQ without debate if the estimated budget implications did not exceed $25,000. If, however, the amount exceeded that limit, they could be debated or amended by the Committee.

38. The Committee would need to take a position on the proposal by Canada that the consideration of programme budget implications should be subject to the 24-hour rule. If he understood the usual procedure correctly, the statements of programme budget implications were prepared and issued before the relevant draft resolutions were adopted by the Main Committees, and were thus available for some time before their introduction in the Fifth Committee. In practice, it had considered programme budget implications on the basis of oral reports presented by the Chairman of ACABQ. If the 24-hour rule were to be applied, those oral reports would probably have to be repeated. He feared that such a procedure would delay not only the work of the Fifth Committee but of the General Assembly as a whole.

39. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands) said that his delegation supported the third course outlined by the Chairman. He observed that when adopting the current budget, the Committee had managed to deal with the proposed programme budget and with the budget implications of new resolutions without difficulty. All the statements of programme budget implications currently before the Committee had been issued before 28 November and the members of his Committee had therefore had ample time to consider them. He stressed that the Netherlands could not approve of the second course of action described by the Chairman, which would effectively cause the Committee to relinquish control over the budget.

40. Mr. OSELLA (Argentina) said that, over the next few weeks, the Committee had to complete its consideration of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, which involved approximately $2.4 billion. The Committee was currently considering programme budget implications that did not exceed $1 million and, in order to expedite its work, it should accept the need for exceptional procedures. The third course of action presented by the Chairman was the most pragmatic and would enable the Committee to resolve the problem.

41. Mr. CHUINKAM (Cameroon) said that his delegation supported the views of the Netherlands and Argentina.

42. Mr. STITT (United Kingdom) said that his delegation supported the views of the three previous speakers. The Secretariat should be completely explicit about what could be accommodated within the budget estimates and what was being sought additionally.

43. Mr. INOMATA (Japan) said that the Committee seemed to be in agreement on the need to review the procedure relating to perennial activities. Such activities were clearly stated and addressed in paragraph 3B.47 of the proposed programme budget. The Advisory Committee should review the procedure and make an appropriate recommendation at the next session of the General Assembly.

44. If approved, the proposed reduction of $300,000 would have an impact on the resources available for the implementation of the draft resolutions under discussion, as well as draft resolution A/C.1/48/L.18, and his delegation appreciated the Controller's assurances that the expenses of the ad hoc expert groups were already included in the provision for perennial activities. The impact of the reduction of $300,000 should be analysed by the end of the current regular session of the General Assembly.

45. Mrs. GOICOCHEA (Cuba) said that, although the statements of programme budget implications of draft resolutions A/C.1/48/L.6, L.19, L.40 and L.41 (A/C.5/48/32-34) were dated 24 November 1993, they had been made available to Committee members only that morning. The Committee should therefore consider the question of the late submission of documents and take a decision on the matter.

46. Her delegation fully agreed with the representative of Japan that the Advisory Committee should review its procedure, and she had taken careful note of the comments made by the Chairman of ACABQ regarding the interpretation of the provisions of General Assembly resolution 47/213. The Fifth Committee should prepare a draft resolution requesting the Advisory Committee to study the situation and submit its views to the Committee at its next session.

47. Her delegation agreed with the Chairman's suggestion that the Committee should take a decision on the programme budget implications submitted at the current meeting on the basis of the Advisory Committee's proposals. However, her delegation had not had an opportunity to consider those proposals and was not in a position to state how it would act in future. The Committee should take care not to let exceptional circumstances become the rule.

48. The CHAIRMAN said that he took it that the Committee accepted the imperfect procedure that it had applied in the past. He inquired whether the representative of Canada wished to insist on the 24-hour rule.

49. Mr. MILLER (Canada) said that his delegation recognized the need for consensus and would accede to the Chairman's request.

50. The CHAIRMAN said he would take it that, on the basis of the statement of the programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/48/32), and of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee wished to inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft

(The Chairman)

resolution A/C.1/48/L.6, no additional requirements would arise under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995. The General Assembly would, however, need to grant an exception to allow the meetings to be held away from established United Nations headquarters cities and to pay for travel and subsistence costs of governmental representatives.

51. It was so decided.

52. Mr. INOMATA (Japan) said that his delegation had joined in the consensus in a spirit of compromise. However, it would be regrettable if, in calculating the programme budget implications of draft resolutions, the Secretariat continued to assume that the full amounts requested by the Secretary-General in the proposed programme budget would be approved. An appropriate procedure should be found to make adjustments at a later stage of the exact amount that would be required based on the outcome of the discussions in the Fifth Committee and the General Assembly on the Advisory Committee's recommendation.

53. Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria) said that her delegation had joined in the consensus on the understanding that the granting of an exception to the headquarters principle did not constitute a precedent for future decisions.

54. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands) said that his delegation had joined in the consensus on the understanding that the decision was without prejudice to the decision of the General Assembly on the Secretary-General's proposals and the Advisory Committee's recommendations concerning the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995. That consideration also applied to the Committee's decisions on documents A/C.5/48/33 and 34.

55. The CHAIRMAN said he would take it that, on the basis of the statement of the programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General, and of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee (A/C.5/48/33), the Fifth Committee wished to inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.1/48/L.19, no additional requirements would arise under section 3B of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995. The General Assembly would, however, need to grant an exception to its principle that United Nations bodies should meet at their respective established headquarters to authorize the meeting to be held at Windhoek, Namibia.

56. It was so decided.

57. Mr. INOMATA (Japan) and Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria) said that the position their delegations had taken with respect to the previous decision also applied to the Committee's decision on document A/C.5/48/33.

58. The CHAIRMAN said he would take it that, on the basis of the statement of the programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General, and of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee (A/C.5/48/34), the Fifth Committee wished to inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolutions A/C.1/48/L.40 and A/C.1/48/L.41, an additional appropriation of $184,000 would be required for general temporary assistance under section 3B of the proposed

(The Chairman)

programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 for the servicing of the Conference on Disarmament in 1994, subject to the guidelines for the use and operation of the contingency fund adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 42/211. Furthermore, an amount of $51,500 would be required under section 28 (Staff assessment), to be offset by the same amount under income section 1 (Income from staff assessment).

59. It was so decided.

60. Mrs. GOICOCHEA (Cuba) said that her delegation's decision to join in the consensus on the three decisions that the Committee had just adopted did not prejudge its final position on the Secretary-General's proposals relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995. The Committee should take the necessary measures to ensure that the 24-hour rule was observed.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
39th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 15 December 1993
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 39th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HADID (Algeria)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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AGENDA ITEM 122: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 123: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995 (continued)

Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/48/SR.39
23 February 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

93-82996 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 122: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 123: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995 (continued)

Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (A/45/745 and A/C.5/48/28)

1. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA) (A/C.5/48/28) and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) (A/48/745).

2. Mr. MERIFIELD (Canada) said that once again the Committee was being asked to take decisions on large amounts of money at short notice. The Canadian delegation would prefer the matter to be deferred until the next meeting.

3. With regard to paragraph 14 of the Secretary-General's report, if additional resources were needed during the first part of 1994, the correct place to seek them was in the General Assembly rather than in ACABQ. Furthermore, perhaps some of the elements of the proposed additional appropriation could be absorbed by means of savings elsewhere in the programme budget. The Canadian delegation noted in particular the high cost of vehicles. It certainly wanted the operation to go ahead with a proper number of observers properly serviced, but the Committee did have a duty to review the proposals thoroughly.

4. Mr. FRANCIS (Australia) said that the Australian Government was in favour of the activities going ahead. As an interim measure, therefore, the Committee should grant a commitment authority to the Secretary-General. However, any decision should be reviewed in the context of the first performance report for the next biennium. The Secretary-General should certainly try to absorb the additional costs through savings.

5. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the General Assembly had approved an appropriation of about $13 million for 1992. The Secretary-General was now reporting overspending of $61,200 but he was not requesting an additional appropriation for 1992-1993. The overspending would be absorbed through savings reported in the second performance report for the biennium 1992-1993. The Secretary-General was not requesting the same level of resources for 1994-1995: the amount was approximately $9 million for the period 1 January to 31 July 1994. The Advisory Committee did not feel it appropriate that the expenditure should be included in the first performance report for 1994-1995; the 1992 procedure for an additional appropriation should be followed again. The sum was a small one in an area where the United Nations had spent millions since 1960 in its efforts to dismantle apartheid. Its approval should not therefore cause any great problem.

6. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) said that the details of the additional request were given in annex I of the report of the Secretary-General. The main element was salaries: at the end of September the Security Council had agreed to the Secretary-General's request for authorization for an additional 40 observers. As to vehicles, UNOMSA covered a very large area and transport was therefore a big cost element. The Secretariat thought that it would be difficult to absorb the $9 million in the first half of 1994. The overspending of $61,200 was shown under section 2 of the budget in table 2 in the second performance report for 1992-1993 (A/C.5/48/48).

7. Mrs. GOICOCHEA (Cuba) said that the Cuban delegation supported the proposal of the Advisory Committee.

8. Mr. ONWUALIA (Nigeria) said that the Nigerian delegation also supported the ACABQ recommendation and did not see any reason to defer the matter.

9. The CHAIRMAN said that with the consent of the representative of Nigeria he would take it that the Committee wished to defer its consideration of the matter to its next meeting.

10. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
40th meeting
held on
Thursday, 16 December 1993
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 40th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HADID (Algeria)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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AGENDA ITEM 122: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 123: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995 (continued)

Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (continued)

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/48/SR.40
24 February 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

93-83015 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 122: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 123: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995 (continued)

Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (continued) (A/48/745; A/C.5/48/28 and A/C.5/48/48)

1. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to resume its consideration of the financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA) and proposed the text of the following draft decision:

"The General Assembly,

(a) takes note of the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/48/28) and endorses the recommendations of the Advisory Committee (A/48/745);

(b) notes that the estimated costs of UNOMSA for the period from mid-September 1992 to 31 December 1993 will be $13,106,100 against an appropriation of $13,044,900 and that the additional requirement of $61,200 will be reflected in the second performance report under section 2 of the programme budget for 1992-1993;

(c) approves an appropriation of $8,994,100 required under section 4 of the proposed programme budget for 1994-1995 to cover the costs of UNOMSA from 1 January to 31 July 1994, on the understanding that these requirements would be treated outside the procedures related to the contingency fund and without prejudice to the future mode of financing;

(d) also approves an appropriation of $1,324,300 under section 28 (Staff assessment) of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, offset by the same amount under income section 1 (Income from staff assessment);

(e) Concurs in particular with paragraph 8 of the recommendations of ACABQ;

(f) Requests the Secretary-General in administering the appropriations to take full account of the recommendations in paragraphs 9 and 10 of the report of ACABQ."

2. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands), supported by Mr. RAMOS (Spain), said that his delegation fully supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations contained in document A/48/745. Drawing attention to paragraph (b) of the proposed draft decision, however, he noted that the second performance report contained no reference to UNOMSA under section 2 of the programme budget for 1992-1993. He would welcome an explanation by the Controller of the reasons for that omission.

3. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) said that chapter I, section B, of the second performance report (A/C.5/48/48) dealt with additional requirements relating to the implementation of decisions of policy-making organs and/or unforeseen expenses certified by the Secretary-General as relating to the maintenance of peace and security during 1993 after the revised 1992-1993 appropriations had been approved by the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. The additional requirement of $61,200 was not categorized under that heading. An addendum to each section of the budget would be issued separately and the expenditures covered in the relevant addendum would include the additional requirement of $61,200.

4. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands) said that, although he had not fully understood the Controller's explanation, his delegation would nevertheless support the proposed draft decision.

5. The CHAIRMAN said that he took it that the Committee wished to adopt the proposed draft decision.

6. It was so decided.

7. Mr. MERIFIELD (Canada) said that Canada had been a strong supporter of General Assembly resolutions on the situation in South Africa. Through the Commonwealth Office, moreover, it had promoted the boycott against that State, which had helped to produce the political consensus that was currently developing there. The objections which he was about to raise were therefore not politically motivated. His delegation was still in the process of studying the programme budget proposals for the biennium 1994-1995 and was frankly confused by the piecemeal manner in which it was being considered. He would therefore welcome clarification by the Controller of the procedure that was being followed.

8. Mrs. SHEAROUSE (United States of America), supported by Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands), said that she fully shared the concerns just expressed by the delegation of Canada and would also welcome clarification by the Controller of the procedure that was being followed. The Committee was being asked to approve various appropriations in isolation from the programme budget proposals. In her view, a more coherent approach was needed.

9. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) recalled that the Chairman had outlined three procedural options to the Committee, which had decided to follow the established budgeting procedure. Delegations were all aware of the resources that would be available under section 2. Moreover, the Secretary-General had clearly stated that he was unable to absorb the cost in question from within existing resources and that an additional appropriation of $61,200 would be required in 1994.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

10. The CHAIRMAN said that he had informed the President of the General Assembly a few days earlier of the prospects for the work of the Fifth Committee and the possible impact of the Committee's work on the work of the plenary Assembly.

11. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands) said that he had seen an advance copy of a proposal by the Secretary-General to request a unified lump sum appropriation of $1.5 billion for various peace-keeping operations. In view of the magnitude of the appropriation and the time which the Committee would still be required to spend on its consideration of the proposals for the regular programme budget, he wished to suggest that the first week of February be set aside for consideration of the Secretary-General's request. He noted that detailed reports on a number of peace-keeping operations had already been prepared and urged that all relevant information should be made available to the Committee as soon as possible, without which many delegations might find it difficult to approve the Secretary-General's request.

12. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the report of the Advisory Committee on the Secretary-General's request for an appropriation of $1.56 billion for peace-keeping operations was not a "unified" report, since it would consist of 17 sections. Before the Committee took a decision to defer consideration of the item, it should await the relevant report of the Secretary-General and the corresponding recommendations of the Advisory Committee, which would be issued very shortly. Postponement of consideration of the Secretary-General's request would create a number of problems, since several peace-keeping operations would be without spending authority on 1 January 1994. Other missions would require such authority even before the start of the new year.

13. Mr. MADDENS (Belgium) recalled that, in August 1993, a similar situation had existed concerning the spending authority of a number of peace-keeping operations and wondered precisely what arrangements had been put in place since then. His delegation would, however, agree to await the report of the Advisory Committee before taking a definitive position on the matter.

14. Mr. MERIFIELD (Canada) noted that, in approving the Secretary-General's request for commitment authority in August 1993, the Committee had requested that the item on peace-keeping operations should be programmed for consideration by the General Assembly in February 1994 and that requests for authority in respect of ongoing operations should be introduced in the normal way in November 1993. He would welcome an explanation from the Secretariat as to why that deadline had not been respected.

15. Ms. PEÑA (Mexico) supported the views expressed by the delegations of the Netherlands, Canada and Belgium.

16. Mrs. OSODE (Liberia) fully endorsed the approach suggested by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee. Her delegation had a particular interest in the financing of peace-keeping operations and looked forward to the discussion that would follow the issuance of the report of the Secretary-General and the corresponding recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

17. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that a problem would still exist even if the General Assembly gave contingency authority in respect of some peace-keeping operations. In cases in which the General Assembly gave authority to commit resources with

(Mr. Mselle)

the prior concurrence of the Advisory Committee, the established procedure when the General Assembly was in session was for the Advisory Committee to recommend to the General Assembly the amount in respect of which it had concurred.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
41st meeting
held on
Friday, 17 December 1993
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 41st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HADID (Algeria)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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AGENDA ITEM 127: SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 168: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued)

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/48/SR.41
24 February 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

93-83037 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 123: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995 (continued)

1. Mr. OSELLA (Argentina) (Vice-Chairman), reporting on the informal consultations on agenda item 123, said that some delegations favoured authorizing interim appropriations in order to allow the Committee more time to study the budget proposals, but he did not think members were as yet ready to take a decision on the matter. He remained optimistic, however, that it would be possible to reach consensus in the days ahead if there was a radical change in the way delegations were approaching the negotiations.

AGENDA ITEM 127: SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

2. Mr. MAYCOCK (Barbados), reporting on the informal consultations on agenda item 127, said that although wide agreement had been reached on a draft report on the item which he had prepared, some delegations still had difficulties with specific points. The negotiations were continuing and he hoped that it would be possible to reach agreement by 18 December, the date set for the conclusion of the informal consultations.

3. The CHAIRMAN appealed to all delegations to weigh any reservations they might still have against the importance of achieving consensus on the item.

AGENDA ITEM 168: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued)

4. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands), reporting on the consultations on agenda item 168, said that although members were close to a general agreement, the issue of the reaffirmation of General Assembly resolution 47/28 was still outstanding. Some delegations had shown great flexibility in the negotiations and were to be commended. He hoped it would be possible to reach complete agreement shortly.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
42nd meeting
held on
Friday, 17 December 1993
at 7 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 42nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HADID (Algeria)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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AGENDA ITEM 168: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 138: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS

(a) FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS

AGENDA ITEM 159: FINANCING OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE PROSECUTION OF PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW COMMITTED IN THE TERRITORY OF THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA SINCE 1991

AGENDA ITEM 121: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 123: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995 (continued)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.5/48/L.6 concerning agenda item 121

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/48/SR.42
25 February 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

93-83043 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 7.35 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 168: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued) (A/C.5/48/5)

1. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands), speaking as Coordinator of the informal consultations on the item, reported that no agreement had been reached on a text in the informal consultations.

2. The CHAIRMAN said that it was understood that the issue of desirable ranges would be taken up at the resumed forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, with the expectation that all relevant documents would be available in advance.

3. He proposed that the Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it take note of the report (A/C.5/48/5) submitted by the Secretary-General on behalf of and with the approval of the members of the Administrative Committee on Coordination.

4. Mr. RAE (India) proposed that the General Assembly should also take note of the statement made by the Security Coordinator on the matter.

5. The CHAIRMAN said that he took it that the Committee wished to adopt his proposed recommendation, as amended by India.

6. It was so decided.

7. Mrs. GOICOCHEA (Cuba), supported by Mr. CHUINKAM (Cameroon), speaking in explanation of position, observed that, in future, the Committee should restrict itself to discussing the question only as it concerned officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and related organizations and their privileges and immunities, and should leave the legal issues and the organizational aspects of peace-keeping to the Sixth Committee and the Fourth Committee respectively.

AGENDA ITEM 138: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS

(a) FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (A/48/470, A/48/622 and A/48/757)

8. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) said that the United States could support the recommendations on the support account for peace-keeping operations in the report of the Secretary-General (A/48/470) as amended in the report of the Advisory Committee (A/48/757), but had serious problems regarding staffing and other support for the Department of Administration and Management. He therefore proposed that the Committee should accept the recommendations concerning the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the Field Operations Division and postpone all other decisions until the resumed forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

9. Mr. MADDENS (Belgium), supported by Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands), Mr. MILLER (Canada), Mr. BOIN (France), Miss PEÑA (Mexico) and Mr. MANCINI (Italy), said that, having had an opportunity to read only the Secretary-General's report and not the ACABQ report because of the documentation delay, proposed that both of those important documents should be deferred for proper consideration at the resumed session.

10. Mr. KELLY (Ireland), supported by Mr. FRANCIS (Australia), urged that the question of peace-keeping should be taken up as soon as possible at the resumed session.

11. Mr. GJESDAL (Norway), supported by Mr. MOSALA (Lesotho), concurred with the proposal for deferral, observing that the Secretary-General must be given the resources needed to carry out the peace-keeping operations already in place and to meet the requirements agreed to by Member States in the various General Assembly resolutions on the question.

12. Ms. SAEKI (Japan) agreed that consideration of the support account should be deferred to the resumed session. Furthermore, since no ACABQ report had been supplied in conjunction with the Secretary-General's report on the Peace-keeping Reserve Fund (A/48/622), that issue needed to be deferred as well. Japan had serious problems with the latter document.

13. Mr. DANKWA (Ghana), supported by Ms. HOLLAND (United Kingdom), wondered what would be the practical effect on ongoing peace-keeping operations - to which all States attached great importance - of postponing consideration of the reports of both the Secretary-General and ACABQ until the resumed session.

14. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States) observed that over the past session the Secretariat had managed to carry on with or without General Assembly approval and would no doubt continue to make arrangements for funding if needed.

15. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), referring to the effect of a deferral of consideration of the support account for peace-keeping operations, noted that ACABQ had, as an interim measure, approved all 194 posts requested in annex I of the Secretary-General's report (A/48/470) as well as the 72 additional temporary posts requested in annex II. The Secretary-General was not therefore proposing to take unilateral action. The Secretary-General in his report proposed the establishment of a total of 199 posts, whereas the Advisory Committee had accepted 148 posts, as indicated in paragraphs 30 and 31 and the detailed tables at the end of its report (A/48/757).

16. If the Committee deferred the issue until the resumed session, the 194 posts listed in annex I of the Secretary-General's report would be available, but not the proposed 72 additional posts. That would have a devastating effect on essential peace-keeping activities throughout the Secretariat.

17. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands) assured the Controller that if delegations were urging deferral of the question it was not being done casually. The issue required the kind of careful consideration that was precluded by the late issuance of documents. The Netherlands itself, which was current in its peace-keeping assessments and had many troops in peace-keeping operations, was following the support account issue closely.

18. Mr. RAE (India), supported by Mr. CHUINKAM (Cameroon) and Ms. HOLLAND (United Kingdom), said that he agreed that the reports on the support account needed further study but wondered whether some provisional arrangement could not be made to ensure the continuance beyond 1 January 1994 of the peace-keeping operations already in place. In the past, it had been left to the Advisory Committee to authorize posts. Perhaps the number of posts could be approved at the current session, as well as the two points referred to by the United States, and the policy decisions could be left for the resumed session.

19. Mrs. OSODE (Liberia) suggested deferring consideration simply to the following week rather than to the resumed session.

20. Mr. DANKWA (Ghana) drew attention to the two main issues relating to the support account with which the Fifth Committee was expected to deal: a policy decision on the use of the support account, and the need to finance peace-keeping operations. The Advisory Committee, aware of the political ramifications of the use of the support account but also aware of the urgency of funding peace-keeping operations, had discussed funding modalities in paragraphs 33 and 34 of its report (A/48/757) and consequently recommended approval of 148 posts for a limited six-month period.

21. Deferral could have serious political repercussions, and delegations should be given a few days in which to study the two reports and take a decision.

22. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman, Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the report (A/48/757) was one of the most difficult that the Advisory Committee had had to prepare because it dealt with issues of policy which required guidelines from the General Assembly and with the question of what role, if any, should be played by the regular budget in providing support for peace-keeping operations. Since the proposals made in the report of the Secretary-General (A/48/470) in effect expanded the scope of the support account, the Advisory Committee, because of the time constraint, had considered deferring its consideration but had concluded that doing so would adversely affect ongoing peace-keeping operations.

23. In its report the Advisory Committee recommended deferring action on paragraph 39 (a) and (b) of the Secretary-General's report and made recommendations in relation to paragraph 39 (c), on the question of authorizing expenditure in 1993 and 1994. Expenditure for 1993 was already covered by the authorization given by the Advisory Committee. However, as of 1 January 1994, the Secretariat would need authority to finance 194 posts, some of which dated back more than four or five years. Of the remaining 199 posts, including 72 posts which the Advisory Committee had temporarily approved in July 1993, the

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Advisory Committee recommended that 148 should be financed. The total manning table would therefore be 342 posts. The Advisory Committee also recommended that the posts should be financed just for six months in 1994. Because of the policy issues relating to the opening of the support account, the Advisory Committee recommended that the Secretary-General should submit a report which would include the information the Committee had requested.

24. The support account contained funds that had already been approved by the General Assembly on the basis of recommendations by the Committee. Every time a peace-keeping operation was authorized, funds were appropriated for transfer to the support account. Currently the support account was used by the Secretary-General with the prior concurrence of the Advisory Committee for established posts. In recent years, use of the account had been expanded to include other items and common service costs. Fundamental differences of opinion had emerged in the Advisory Committee and in the Fifth Committee on what should be financed by the support account. The report of the Secretary-General did not contain clear criteria that would permit either Committee to make a determination on what exactly should be funded from the support account and what should be funded from the regular budget. In view of that situation and of issues related to the methodology for the support account, including the question of funding, the Advisory Committee had decided that that issue should be reviewed.

25. If the Committee decided to postpone consideration of the Secretary-General's report, the Secretary-General would be entitled to go back to the Advisory Committee and request commitment authority for whatever amounts he deemed appropriate to cover expenses until the Fifth Committee and Advisory Committee considered the proposals. If the Committee approved the posts in question for a shorter period, it would have to meet very early in 1994. The Advisory Committee had decided on a six-month period so as to allow time for the Secretary-General to prepare a report and for the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee to consider it. If the Committee decided to approve the posts for a shorter period, it would still have to give commitment authority to the Secretary-General.

26. Mr. BOIN (France) said that the use of the support account raised fundamental questions, especially with regard to the proposed extension of the utilization of that account. He proposed that the Committee should recommend that the General Assembly should agree on a provisional basis to finance the posts in the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, pending a complete review of the question by the Advisory Committee - in his view, the review should take place during the first quarter of 1994 - and that it should defer consideration of the requests relating to posts in the Department of Administration and Management.

27. Mr. MADDENS (Belgium) said that his delegation attached great importance to peace-keeping operations and therefore felt that the Committee should defer its consideration of the matter until the following week.

28. Mr. OWADE (Kenya) said that the Committee must consider the matter during the current session; it would be disastrous to defer consideration to the resumed session.

29. Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria) said that her delegation strongly supported peace-keeping operations and did not want to see them endangered. She suggested that the Committee should support the Advisory Committee's recommendations for the first six months of 1994 and defer consideration of the policy issues until the resumed session.

30. Mr. TAN (Cambodia) agreed that the Committee should approve the Advisory Committee's recommendations.

31. Mr. MICHALSKI (United States of America) said that his delegation did not agree with the observation in paragraph 14 of the Secretary-General's report (A/48/622) that arrears in payments could not be credited to the Peace-keeping Reserve Fund.

32. The late consideration of so important an issue as the support account was indicative of the disastrous state of management in the United Nations. Much had been said about building confidence in the management and financing of the Organization; if decisions on matters of such importance were taken at the late minute confidence in the Organization would be further undermined.

33. Referring to the comments made by the Controller, he said that far too many documents were being issued late; if the Committee was unable to reach agreement on financing the posts in question, it would be because the Secretariat had failed to present solid, well-based proposals for consideration by the Committee.

34. He wished to underscore his delegation's grave concern about the manner in which highly important financial decisions were being taken. United States taxpayers would be appalled to find out how their tax dollars were being wasted.

35. Mrs. GOICOCHEA (Cuba) said that the item was so important that the Committee should take a provisional decision before the end of the session.

36. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands) said that his delegation agreed that the report on the Peace-keeping Reserve Fund should be submitted to the Advisory Committee for comments, and it supported the statement by the United States representative regarding the manner in which documentation was being provided and the way in which Member States were being asked by the Secretariat to agree to important decisions on very short or no notice.

37. Mr. MANCINI (Italy) said that the question could not be deferred even though the relevant documents had been supplied rather late.

38. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee would clearly need to have informal consultations on the question of the support account in order to arrive at a decision.

(The Chairman)

39. He took it that the Committee wished to defer to the resumed forty-eighth session the consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on the Peace-keeping Reserve Fund (A/48/622).

40. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 159: FINANCING OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE PROSECUTION OF PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW COMMITTED IN THE TERRITORY OF THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA SINCE 1991 (A/C.5/48/36, A/C.5/48/44 and A/48/765)

41. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman, Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee's report (A/48/765) was very brief. For the reasons explained in that report, it was recommending that the General Assembly should authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments not exceeding $5,594,000 for the funding of the International Tribunal. It was also recommending that the General Assembly should determine the mode of financing of the Tribunal. There were a number of issues that needed to be clarified, including the conditions of service of judges. The Advisory Committee had not yet had an opportunity to consider the report on conditions of service and allowances of the Members of the International Tribunal (A/C.5/48/36) and was surprised that it had taken so long for a three-page document to be submitted.

42. Mr. MADDENS (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the European Union had already expressed its position on the substance of the question at the resumed forty-seventh session of the General Assembly, and that position remained unchanged. While accepting, with difficulty, the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, the European Union wished to note that it attached the greatest importance to the work of the Tribunal and was gratified that it had begun work at The Hague and had initiated consultations on a number of practical modalities. The question of the financing of the Tribunal was therefore urgent. That question could only be resolved through implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/235. The current situation could not continue. The General Assembly must ensure that the provisional financing did not have negative consequences on the work of the Tribunal.

43. Mr. MOLIN (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the five Nordic countries, said that the Nordic countries noted that the Secretary-General, in paragraph 61 of his report (A/C.5/48/44), stated that the nature of the activities to be undertaken required core financing through assessed contributions. To the Nordic countries, the financing of the Tribunal through assessed contributions was a question of principle; the administration of justice by the United Nations must be in the name of the Organization and should therefore be the responsibility of all Member States. That was the only way to safeguard the absolute independence of the Tribunal. The financing of the Tribunal must be an integral part of the regular budget of the Organization. It was imperative to ensure full financing of the activities of the Tribunal.

(Mr. Molin, Sweden)

44. Since there were a number of outstanding issues that would affect the real costs of the activities of the Tribunal, the Nordic countries agreed with the Advisory Committee's recommendation, but wished to stress that that did not alter their position of principle on the mode of financing.

45. Mrs. GOICOCHEA (Cuba) said she fully supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee in its report. However, she wondered how the Committee could proceed to consider the question of financing of the Tribunal when it had not had sufficient time to study the details of the Secretary-General's report on the matter. As matters stood, Cuba could not take a decision on that question.

46. The CHAIRMAN said that, as he understood the discussion in the Committee to that point, delegations would accept with reluctance the recommendations of ACABQ in document A/C.5/765, but wished to have their opinions concerning the mode of financing of the Tribunal to be taken into account at a later date, perhaps during the resumed session.

47. Mr. KELLER (United States of America) said that his delegation strongly supported the proposal to establish the Tribunal and urged the Assembly to ensure that the necessary funding was provided by 31 December 1993. It also endorsed the view of the Nordic countries that the Tribunal should be funded from the regular budget. Since the Tribunal was not a peace-keeping operation it should not be funded from voluntary contributions.

48. While the United States was generally concerned that the funds provided would not suffice for full and vigorous prosecutions, it could accept the proposal subject to certain reservations. Those reservations concerned, first and foremost, the selection of appropriate office space for the Tribunal in The Hague. In addition, the United States wanted to be certain that, upon the appointment of a Prosecutor, the work of the War Crimes Commission of Experts established pursuant to resolution 780 (1991) would be folded into the office of the Prosecutor.

49. Mr. ELZIMAITY (Egypt) said that his delegation's views with respect to the Tribunal tallied with those expressed inter alia by the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which had declared that the Tribunal should be given all the resources necessary to begin its work as soon as possible. However, it was prepared to accept the recommendations of the Advisory Committee until such time as a final decision on the financing of the Tribunal could be made.

50. Mr. BEN HAMIDA (Tunisia) supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee in document A/48/765, but stressed the urgent need to find a permanent solution to the funding problem.

51. Ms. SAEKI (Japan) reiterated the position of her Government that expenses relating to the Tribunal should be charged to the regular budget.

52. Mr. ZAINUDDIN (Malaysia), supported by Mr. MGBOKWERE (Nigeria), Mr. NDOBOLI (Uganda), Miss PEÑA (Mexico) and Mr. ONURSAL (Turkey), said that the resources provided to the Tribunal must be sufficient to enable it to carry out its activities without interruption. Moreover, in view of the time constraints facing the Committee, and, in the absence of a permanent arrangement for financing, his delegation could accept, on a provisional basis, the recommendations in paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Advisory Committee's report.

53. Miss PEÑA (Mexico) said her delegation also supported the provisional recommendations of ACABQ concerning financing of the Tribunal. Mexico was also prepared to consider permanent financing arrangements at the resumed session, despite its reservations about funding from the regular budget.

54. The CHAIRMAN said he took it that the Committee wished to recommend to the General Assembly that it should take note of the report of the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/48/36; endorse the recommendations of ACABQ in paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/48/765); and decide to continue to consider, at its resumed session, the issue of the mode of financing of the Tribunal.

55. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 121: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/C.5/48/L.6)

56. The CHAIRMAN introduced the draft resolution contained in document A/C.5/48/L.6 which he was submitting following informal consultations.

57. Mr. ELZIMAITY (Egypt) said that, although his delegation would not oppose the adoption of the draft resolution, it believed that section II, paragraph 9 was ambiguous and gave rise to a wide range of interpretations, some of which were in conflict with the position of Egypt. He would like the record to show that Egypt understood the reference in that paragraph to an "additional independent entity" as referring to an entity in addition to the Office for Inspections and Investigations established by the Secretary-General.

58. The CHAIRMAN said that he took it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.5/48/L.6.

59. It was so decided.

60. Mrs. GOICOCHEA (Cuba), explaining her delegation's position, said that her delegation attached particular importance to Section I, Part A, paragraph 1, and that, with regard to Part B, it understood that the Committee's adoption of paragraph 5 concerning the format of the medium-term plan would not prejudice the plan itself in any way. Cuba looked forward to reviewing the proposed new format when it became available.

(Mrs. Goicochea, Cuba)

61. With regard to Part B, paragraph 6, she expressed the hope that the Secretariat would follow the regulations governing programme planning when preparing the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan and, with regard to Part C, she said that the analytical report on the restructuring of the Secretariat was especially urgent, since such restructuring could have a significant impact on programmes.

62. As to section II, Cuba attached particular importance to the second preambular paragraph and to paragraphs 2, 3, 4 and 10, and agreed with the comments made by the representative of Egypt with respect to paragraph 9. Finally, with regard to section III, she said that Cuba attached importance to paragraph 3 concerning equitable geographical representation.

63. Mr. DAMICO (Brazil) said that he had been pleased to note the discussion in Section I, Part A concerning mandates and prerogatives. With regard to Part B, he said that Brazil attached importance to paragraph 5 and hoped that the new format for the medium-term plan would be provided in the near future. Moreover, it was unfortunate that the request made in General Assembly resolution 47/42 B of 6 May 1993 had had to be reiterated.

64. As to section II, Brazil attached particular importance to paragraph 6 on the need to respect the separate and distinct functions of external and internal oversight mechanisms. He also endorsed the fifth preambular paragraph on the need for adequate intergovernmental programme evaluation and shared the views of Cuba with respect to the second preambular paragraph. While agreeing that the wording of paragraph 9 was ambiguous, he pointed out that, in that instance, ambiguity was not necessarily a bad thing. Brazil was gratified to see from the second preambular paragraph of section III that alleged cases of fraud in the United Nations would be addressed in an impartial manner.

65. Mr. ROSTING (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the five Nordic countries, welcomed the adoption by consensus of draft resolution A/C.5/48/L.6. With respect to section II concerning oversight mechanisms, the Nordic countries believed that a review of both internal and external oversight mechanisms would be appropriate in order to enhance efficient management. The Nordic countries welcomed the appointment of an Assistant Secretary-General for inspections and investigations and viewed that office as an important part of the process which had been initiated with the adoption of the draft resolution.

66. The Nordic countries endorsed in principle many of the ideas contained in the proposal of the United States for the creation of an office of inspector-general. However, as the Nordic countries had stated previously, further discussions on that question would be necessary in order to clarify certain details. He therefore welcomed the comprehensive analytical process that was foreseen in the resolution and hoped that a consensus would emerge so that a decision on the establishment of the new entity could be taken in the very near future.

(Mr. Rosting, Denmark)

67. The Nordic countries intended to participate constructively in discussions on the modalities of the proposed "additional independent entity". With regard to the relationship between the Secretary-General and the new entity, the Nordic countries held the view that the Secretary-General, as the chief executive of the Organization, would remain ultimately responsible for the efficiency of the United Nations activities including, for example, internal control. The Nordic countries believed that the mandate of the new entity should encompass the United Nations regular budget, peace-keeping operations and related extrabudgetary programmes. With respect to external oversight functions, he believed that, notwithstanding the solution that would eventually emerge, in the future, some of the oversight responsibility of the General Assembly should be shared by the Board of Auditors.

68. Mr. TANG Guangting (China) said that while China had reservations regarding the contents of sections II and III, in view of the cooperative spirit shown by delegations in the course of the informal consultations, it would not impede the adoption of the draft resolution. However, it was his delegation's understanding that the independent entity referred to in section II would be financed from extrabudgetary resources.

69. Mr. ELZIMAITY (Egypt) said he hoped that, in the future, delegations would follow the long-standing tradition of informal consultations and refrain from submitting individual completed draft resolutions without prior notice.

AGENDA ITEM 123: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995 (continued)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.5/48/L.6 concerning agenda item 121

70. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), read out paragraphs 1, 2, 4 and 6 of section III of draft resolution A/C.5/48/L.6, as well as paragraphs 3 (a) and (b) of the statement of programme budget implications of the draft resolution (A/C.5/48/56) in which the Secretary-General requested funds for the activities to be undertaken. The Advisory Committee had considered that statement and thought that the supplementary staff resources were somewhat high. It noted that half of the estimated requirements represented travel of members of the Working Group. It further noted that the activities to be undertaken, as outlined in section B of document A/C.5/48/56, would be managed under section 25A of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1993-1994, section 25 being the section which had the largest resource allocation (proposed at $927 million and revised downward by ACABQ to $889.1 million). The Secretary-General had the authority to transfer within that section, but if he transferred between sections he needed the concurrence of ACABQ.

71. While the Advisory Committee felt that the services indicated in the Secretary-General's statement should be provided, it could not, at that stage, recommend an exact additional figure. The Secretary-General should try to

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absorb much of the estimated expenditure under that item: if, between January and the time of preparation of his first performance report, he encountered any difficulties, he should be authorized to seek ACABQ concurrence for such additional commitments as he might require. The Advisory Committee also requested the Secretary-General to have recourse to any voluntary contributions made pursuant to the request in the draft resolution.

72. It recommended that the General Assembly should be informed that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.5/48/L.6, no additional appropriations would be required at that stage, and that the Secretary-General would seek the concurrence of ACABQ if any additional commitments, as reflected in the performance report, were needed.

73. Mr. TANG Guangting (China) observed that paragraph 1 (c) of document A/C.5/48/L.56 differed from the original text submitted to the Committee: the term "equitable representation" should read "equitable geographical representation".

74. The CHAIRMAN took note of the observation and proposed, based on the statement of programme budget implications submitted by the Secretary-General, and on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, that the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.5/48/L.6, no additional appropriation would be requested at that stage for servicing of the Working Group.

75. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 10.30 p.m.